

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-17 are pending. Claims 1, 11, 12, and 15 have been amended. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

A. Claims 1, 3-9 and 11-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C § 102(b) over Cronkhite (U.S. Patent No. 2,582,105). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As amended, claim 1 recites, in part, a valve assembly that comprises an inlet float valve movable between an open position that permits the flow of liquid through the liquid inlet and into the passageway and a closed position that does not permit the flow of liquid through the liquid inlet and into the passageway.

In the Office Action (page 9), the Office argued that Cronchite discloses a float that provides at least an obstruction into the chamber and therefore prevents the flow of liquid into the chamber. As amended, claim 1 now recites that in the closed position, the flow of liquid is not merely obstructed but is not permitted. As admitted in the Office Action, Cronkhite fails to disclose, or even suggest, the invention now recited in claim 1.

Claims 11, 12, and 15 are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons presented above with respect to claim 1 since claims 11, 12, and 15 recite features similar to the features of claim 1 discussed above.

Claims 3-9, 13, 14, 16, and 17 are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons presented above with respect to claims 1, 11, 12, and 15 by virtue of their dependence upon claims 1, 11, 12, and 15. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

B. Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C § 102(b) over Kerlin (U.S. Patent No. 5,042,519). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As amended, claim 11 recites, in part, an assembly that comprises an inlet float valve movable between an open position that permits the flow of liquid through the liquid inlet into the passageway and into the liquid container and a closed

position that does not permit the flow of liquid through the liquid inlet into the passageway and into the liquid container.

In the Office Action (page 9), the Office argues that Kerlin prevents the flow of liquid into the passageway prior to the force of the fluid overcoming the weight of the ball. As amended, claim 11 recites that the inlet float valve is movable between an open position that permits the flow of liquid through the liquid inlet into the passageway and into the liquid container and a closed position that does not permit the flow of liquid through the liquid inlet into the passageway and into the liquid container. Kerlin does not disclose such a float valve. Even if the Office's argument is correct, as amended, claim 11 recites that the float valve permits or prevents flow ultimately into the liquid container. The vent in Kerlin is not designed to permit or prevent such a flow - only to permit or prevent a flow out of a liquid container.

Accordingly, Kerlin fails to disclose, or even suggest, the invention recited in claim 11. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) over Cronkhite in view of Benjey (U.S. Patent No. 5,860,458). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 10 is believed allowable for at least the reasons presented above with respect to claim 1 since claim 10 is dependent upon claim 1 and Benjey does not remedy the deficiencies of Cronkhite discussed above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

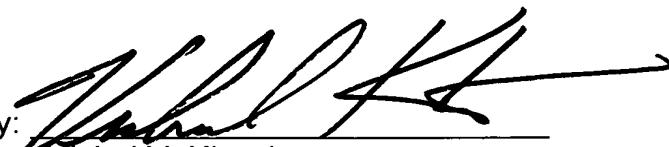
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the claims are now believed to be in form for allowance, and such action is hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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